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ABSTRACT

A design is proposed which would unite the elements of teacher evaluation, differentiated staffing, and inservice education into continuous progress plan, in which teachers would undergo continuous growth experiences and assessment to prepare them for a variety of horizontally differentiated roles. In this way all aspects of a teacher's role--verbal behavior, personal characteristics, and subject matter knowledge--would assume equal importance, and the devisiveness inherent in an arbitrary designation of vertical levels of staffing would be avoided. This three-way design could make the schools truly accountable to the clients of education. (RT)

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AFT

QuEST PAPER

ON A PARADIGM FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

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OCCASIONAL PAPERS FROM THE AFT PROGRAM FOR QUALITY EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS IN TEACHING (QuEST)

12.

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WHAT IS THE AFT-*QuEST* PROGRAM?

Persistent and emerging problems face the nation's schools:

Effective teaching
Use of paraprofessionals
Decentralization and community control
Teacher education and certification
Implementation of the More Effective Schools concept
Eradicating racism in education

As the teacher revolution sweeps through urban America, the American Federation of Teachers becomes increasingly aware of its special responsibilities to offer solutions to these other problems. In January, 1968, the AFT's executive council, with representatives on it from most of the nation's big cities, held a special two-day conference to consider these problems and the AFT's responsibilities.

Out of this conference came a mandate for a *continuing body of active and concerned AFT educators* who could—

Anticipate some of the emerging problems resulting from the rapid social changes in our society;

Meet on a regular basis;

Stimulate and initiate confrontations between teachers and these problems at state, local, and national levels;

Organize and coordinate regional and national conferences;

Prepare tentative positions for action by AFT legislative bodies; and

Suggest action programs to implement their findings.

Thus was born QuEST.

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A PARADIGM FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

by Bob Bhaerman
Director of Research, AFT
August, 1970

Introduction.

The new "in" term of education, accountability, has been expressed in a variety of ways. Sometimes it is used to connote the concept of "educational engineering," which has been defined by Leon Lessinger as "a total process for managing environment and institutional changes to increase educational productivity and promote self-renewal while adhering to local, humane values." Sometimes it is used to suggest "performance contracting," whereby a school contracts with private business firms who attempt to remove educational deficiencies on a guaranteed performance basis or suffer penalties. But mainly the term is used in the sense of establishing goals or a set of promises. Lessinger also has defined accountability as "the promise to deliver on the goals." That is not a bad idea . . . if it could be made to work. Unfortunately, the implications of the promise-concept of accountability seldom have been spelled out in terms of the reality of what it would mean *in actual practice, for the classroom teacher.*

The main reason the new term has become so popular on paper (it claims to offer a more effective use of funds) but so vague when one gets beyond the initial discussion phase is that there actually has been little or no theoretical frame of reference presented on which to "hang it." It is an idea in limbo with, so far, no place to rest.

Most of the exchanges on the topic follow this pattern:

Q: What does accountability mean *in practice? To whom* are teachers accountable?

A: To whomever is in charge of the schools, in other words, the clients, that is, the students or the parents as their agent.

Q: Fine, but specifically, *how would it work* in reality?

At this point there is usually a period of some silence followed by a period of unrelated rambling.

The essay which follows is an attempt to provide a conceptual framework on which to "hang" accountability . . . but not in the lynching sense! It is a design, a paradigm, so that hopefully we can move beyond the introductory exchange of questions and really make "accountability" work.

Problem Areas.

Identification of the problem areas of education is relatively simple. If there is any difficulty, it is in delimiting the list. We have attempted to "delimit the list" to three in the AFT-QuEST plan called "The Union-The School-

The University: A Cooperative Venture in Continuing Teacher Education" (the AFT project with Rutgers University which you will be hearing more about in the weeks and months to follow).

The paradigm below presents the rationale for this AFT-originated action program. It begins, as do most models in education, with the recognition of the major problems, in this case, three.

Evaluation. Teacher evaluation is a complex and controversial matter. Often it is made even more provocative than it need be by the level of mentality reflected in such statements as the one from the so-called "Administrative Leadership Service" of the Educational Service Bureau, Inc., which stated that: "The controversial nature of teacher evaluation poses two overriding questions: (1) should it be done and (2) if so, how." (Teacher Evaluation, ESB, 1967). No thought to the really significant issue? *To what purpose? To what end?*

Much "to-do" has been made about the focus of evaluation: whether it should be on the teacher as a person (attitudes, values, personal qualifications) *or* teaching behavior (style, the specific acts of teaching) *or* the content of teaching (subject matter, knowledge, skills) *or* the effects on pupil learning. Similarly much has been made about the issue of "subjective" vs. "objective" evaluative methods, as if the two could be separated.

An Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development report, however, does present five reasons why teachers are rated (see pages 10-12 in *Better Than Rating*. ASCD, 1950). These are: (1) to determine salary advancement; (2) to change status, e.g., "for promotion, dismissal, from probationary to permanent status on a tenure plan"; (3) to improve instruction, e.g., "ratings clarify standards, ratings prod lagging teachers, ratings provide incentive and reward for good teachers"; (4) for purposes of records, e.g., "to protect both superintendent and teacher-'a teacher may have need in time of crisis to show a record of good service'-, to give administrators information"; (5) for traditional maintenance of personnel records.

With the exception of #3 above, these five reasons miss the point. Even #3 is suspect if it is used, in the language of the ASCD, as a "prod" to keep "teachers on their toes." (p. 11) Another dimension is needed to deal with the most basic question: *how will evaluative data be used?*

In-service Education. In-service education is no less complex and controversial. However, whereas sparks often fly when evaluations occur (at least we'll say that for it), in-service education too often is accompanied by languor and boredom. Any number of surveys attest to the pitiful reputation of in-service programs. Hermanowicz, for example, found a general dissatisfaction with such programs. Most of the teachers he interviewed in his 12-state study believe in-service programs are greatly needed, but that existing programs are grossly deficient. Many teachers expressed the criticisms that the programs are too often useless because they are too general, poorly timed, and devoted mainly to administrative housekeeping. (*The World of Beginning Teachers*, NCTEPS, 1966, pp. 16-25.)

Too often in-service courses from sponsoring colleges are taught in such a manner and by such personnel that even the sponsoring institution will not accept

this type of study for advance credit in its regular degree programs. Too few school systems have taken a hard look at their in-service program in terms of their total education philosophy (that is, if they have one). Too often in-service education has meant individual effort at professional advancement--as set by outside agencies--or the provision of a few days experience wherein an outside consultant--uninformed as to the staff's priority needs within the peculiar characteristics of a unique educational program--makes a one-shot effort soon lost in the maze of daily routine.

To sum it up, in-service education often has been long on *service* and short on *education.* It has been: too fragmented, without integrated activities based upon assessed priority needs, insufficiently supported by budget, and too insignificant to leave a marked and continuing impact upon the teachers and programs.

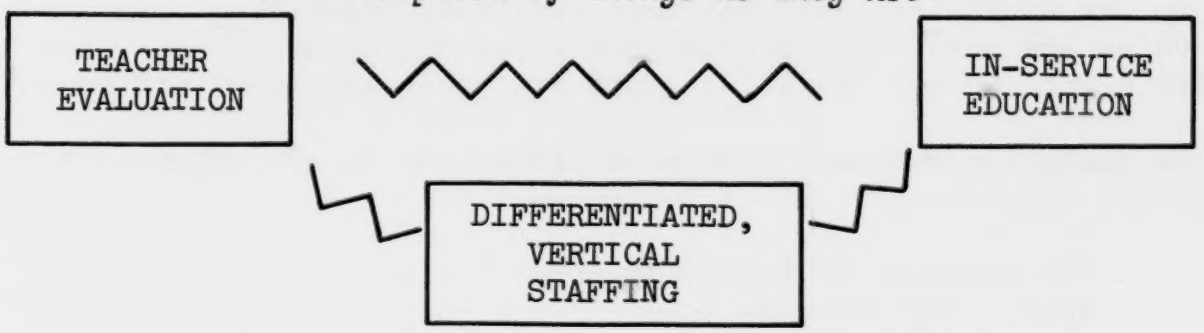
John Goodlad summarized the problem cogently in "The Schools vs. Education" (*Saturday Review*, April 19, 1969):

> Public schooling probably is the only large-scale enterprise in this country that does not provide for systematic updating of the skills and abilities of its employees and for payment of the costs involved. Teachers are on their own as far as their in-service education is concerned, in an environment designed for 'telling' others, yet one that is grossly ill-suited to intellectual pursuits with peers.

Differentiated, Vertical Staffing. Elsewhere we have written at some length about the strengths and weaknesses of differentiated, vertical staffing. As commonly defined, the term implies the creation of a hierarchical ladder of authority, salary, and status. While the concept sometimes includes a number of positive goals (such as role redefinition and instructional innovations), it is *essentially* a strategy in which salaries are determined by the designated "levels of responsibility" assigned to particular roles. The concept, therefore, has generated much discussion and a great deal of confusion about the relative importance of specialists and generalists, of certain teaching tasks and roles, and of the various "levels of responsibility." We feel that this movement toward verticalism will result in dysfunction and divisiveness in American schools.

What we have said so far can be summed up by the following design:

A Description Of Things As They Are



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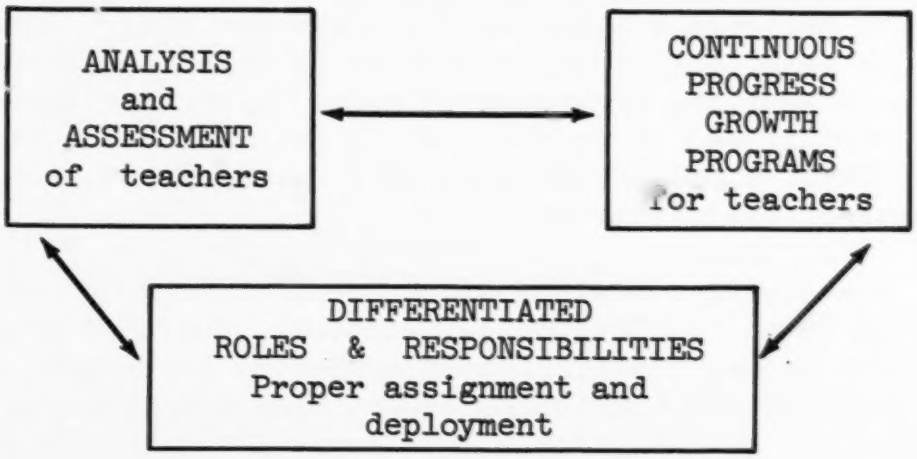
A Suggested Solution: A Paradigm For Accountability In Education.



Evaluation or analysis and assessment? The term evaluation very often has a poor connotation to go along with even poorer practices. In our paradigm for education we conceive of evaluation as a process of analysis and assessment for *positive* not negative ends, for *constructive* not destructive goals.

Our approach removes the fears and the threats which too often accompany the principal or his representative through the classroom door. When a positive purpose is substituted for harassment, there is no reason why a number of evaluative methods, both "subjective" *and* "objective," cannot be used. When the goal of continuous growth of all teachers is substituted for intimidation, there is no reason why evaluation cannot focus upon attitudes *and* values *and* teaching behaviors *and* content *and*, indeed, even the effects on pupils' learning--if it can be determined with validity and reliability. When evaluation is affirmative rather than vindictive, there is no reason why a multitude of resources cannot be utilized: peers, supervisors, college personnel, self-evaluation (e.g., Guided Self-Analysis), and, indeed, even assessment *by students*. When this is done, there is no reason why some combination of devices cannot be used, for example, Minnesota Teacher Attitudes Inventory (attitudes), Allport-Vernon-Lindzey (values), interaction Analysis (verbal behavior), Withall's Social-Emotional Climate Index or the eclectic Spaulding Teacher Activity Rating Schedule (interpersonal relationships), etc., etc. (Note: In the article on teacher effectiveness in the *Encyclopedia of Educational Research* (4th ed.) Flanders reports with cautious optimism that the tools needed for the analysis of the teaching-learning process are gradually being developed. He writes that "The preponderance of evidence gathered so far would indicate that most currently practicing teachers could adopt patterns which are more responsive to the ideas and opinions expressed by pupils and realize a gain in both positive pupil attitudes and pupil achievement." p. 1429)

In our design, evaluation is viewed within the *total context* of a school and the community, as projected in the Baltimore Teachers Union approach to the problem:

> The emphasis in the (Baltimore) Evaluation Project shall constantly be upon product quality control, measuring the success or failure of the teaching effort in the context of the total educational experience of the learner, and the environmental context of the community. Special attention shall be given to the fact that the individual teacher does

not work in an educational nor a social vacuum, and to the fact that success or failure must be constantly measured within the context of the many other inter-related persons, processes, and environmental influences that jointly determine success or failure for quality education of the child-in-school, seen as the evolving educational product of the total school system effort.

In-service or continuous progress? The basic foundations for the paradigm have been conceived in The Continuous Progress Alternative discussed in earlier QuEST papers, #7 and 9; that is, that in-service education must be *made* more meaningful and significant in the lives of teachers and, to the greatest extent possible, that it be individualized and personalized. This goal is based upon the thought expressed so precisely by Don Davies of the USOE, who has stated that we must *"develop teacher talent, not grade it."*

The Continuous Progress Alternative incorporates a number of ideas into the design which provides for:

- Opportunities for both the inexperienced teacher, the professional and paraprofessional, the specialist and the generalist. The starting points and needs of each would be respected.

- Opportunities to help teachers proceed toward carefully selected, highly important goals, such as learning to teach inductively or learning group-process skills useful in working cooperatively with children.

- Opportunities for teachers to become aware of development in fields other than their own, e.g., in government, the humanities, or the natural sciences, as the need demands.

- A variety of group approaches found useful in adult education--various kinds of formal and informal courses, workshops, seminars, institutes, group discussions, role playing, lectures, demonstrations, field trips, investigations, projects, and the like. Also: independent study, travel, books and materials, research, staff development labs.

- High-level teaching by competent instructors who have recent or current classroom experiences and who would use the most current and most appropriate instructional methods.

- Groups of teachers with common needs cutting across building-unit lines would be brought together in joint endeavors, as the need demands.

Differentiated, vertical staffing or differentiated roles and responsibilities? The QuEST paradigm is based upon the assumption that *since teachers continuously grow and change, patterns of staff utilization should be as flexible as possible.* This is reflected in the following "articles of faith" on differentiated staffing:

(1) It is imperative to distinguish between the concept of differentiated staffing (differentiated roles and responsibilities) and the concept of verticalism (the creation of a vertical hierarchy of authority, salary, and status). While we support the former, we reject the divisiveness of the latter. We hold that teaching must be non-competitive, that it must be viewed as a cooperative and communal effort, and so it should remain.

(2) The concept of verticalism is a negative strategy in that it seeks to abandon the single salary schedule and, while it is not synonymous with merit pay (which attempts to base salary on observable differences in "degrees of competency"), it injects a substitute which is equally abhorrent to classroom teachers, namely, that "levels of responsibility" can be distinguished in terms of salary differentials.

(3) The single salary schedule must be maintained. Significant increases in salary should be the means by which teachers are attracted to and retained in the profession.

(4) Differentiated roles and responsibilities on a horizontal basis, i.e., with salaries based on experience and education, implies the use of such positive elements as flexible staff assignment, individualized in-service programs, cooperative team approaches, interdisciplinary curriculum, cross-age grouping and the like. We hold that these innovations can be achieved without the encroachment of verticalism.

(5) We reject the arbitrary designation of vertical levels (of authority, salary, status) between specialists and generalists, one group of specialists and another, or any other educational personnel performing roles designated on such ladders as master teacher, senior teacher, staff teacher, etc.

(6) The concept of horizontally differentiated roles and responsibilities is consistent with the union principle of Extra Pay For Extra Work. This does not assume the inflexible levels common to most vertical models. We reject the attempt at institutionalizing, rigidifying, and bureaucratizing staff utilization patterns. The union alternative, Extra Pay For Extra Work, bases extra salaries upon the performance of additional tasks (e.g., supervision of interns, committee work, teaching in-service courses) *rather than* upon designated, locked-in "levels of responsibility." Since these extra jobs may vary from time to time, rigid ladders of any kind are rejected.

(7) Any plan which goes under the name of differentiated staffing is rejected if it results in the reduction of the *total* number of staff responsible for, or the cost of financing, the education of pupils.

(8) Any plan which deals with staff utilization must involve the teachers union, through the process of negotiation, in all phases of decision making in matters of policy and process.

(9) Within the context of collective bargaining, we support legitimate experimentation and comprehensive research in staff utilization; such re-

search must take into consideration the effects of the models upon educational productivity.

(10) Because the enhancement of the educational process in the classroom is our primary concern, we do not support so-called "educational solutions" which are of dubious value in encouraging the learning process among students, which create more problems than they were intended to resolve, or which promote divisiveness in the teaching ranks.

Summary. Our paradigm for accountability in education is based upon three interrelated concepts:

That the *analysis and assessment* of teachers lead to the establishment of self-growth and self-development programs for teachers and be based upon the specific roles which teachers are performing at any given time.

That the *continuous progress* of teachers be based upon the analysis and assessment of their strengths and weaknesses and, in turn, lead to flexibility in their utilization.

That the *assignment and deployment* of teachers be based upon their unique assessed needs and upon their individualized, on-going, self-development programs.

This is such a basic idea that it makes one wonder why it has never been tried. Perhaps the profession has not been mature enough. Granted, there are a number of concrete questions which will need to be worked out. Are we ready now to try it? Are we ready now to be *accountable* to the clients of education by providing for the *constructive assessment*, the *proper utilization*, and the *continuous growth* of teachers?

Types of Educational Variables Employed in Research on the Effectiveness of Teaching and Teachers

Presage Variables	Process Variables	Product Variables
Teacher Characteristics Sex Age No. of years of teaching Scores on NTE, MMPI, MTAI, etc. Scores on I.Q. tests, MAT, GRE Grades in college courses No. of semester hours in education Ratings by supervisors, principals Tenure status	*Climate* (affective domain) Warmth; praise Direct/indirect interaction Dominative/integrative Teacher-supportive/pupil-supportive Democratic/autocratic/laissez-faire Approval/disapproval Attention Criticism Use of pupil's ideas	*Proximate* Scores on achievement tests Scores on I.Q. tests Scores on language tests (ITPA) Scores on creativity tests Gains in scores on standardized tests Scores on attitude inventories Attendance records Learning curves (trials to criterion) Attending behavior Cooperative behavior Listening skills Study habits
Pupil Characteristics Scores on I.Q. tests Scores on achievement tests Scores on attitude inventories Socio-economic status (SES) Language development (ITPA) Personality characteristics e.g., - anxious - striving - creative	*Cognitive* Orderliness Divergent questioning Structuring, probing Variation in questioning	

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